

countries and exports on consignment basis against payment in freely convertible currencies.

- (v) Encouraging Indian exporters to set up offices in CIS countries.
- (vi) Opening of 3 additional auction platforms in Andhra Pradesh to facilitate the growers to sell their produce early.
- (vii) Persuading the Indian Tobacco Association, Exporters, manufacturers and other Traders to participate actively in the auctions to absorb the tobacco crop produced.
- (viii) Negotiating with tobacco trade to declare a Minimum Guarantee Price (MGP) for tobacco purchase which is higher than the Minimum Support Price (MSP) announced by the Government.
- (ix) Assisting the tobacco trade in obtaining larger quantum to credit from the financial institutions for making purchases of tobacco.
- (x) Participating in trade fairs & exhibitions abroad and arranging buyer-seller meet to enhance tobacco exports.

[Translation]

P.M.R.Y. in Rajasthan

4268. PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn the news item captioned, "Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana - Rajasthan to discontinue scheme" appearing in 'The Statesman' dated February 11, 1997;

(b) if so, whether major shortcomings have been identified in the effective implementation of the Prime Minister Rozgar Yojana in Rajasthan;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the Government propose to take action to bring and improvement in the implementation of the above scheme; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) Yes, Sir. The attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item in 'The Statesman' dated 11.02.1997. But the State Government has stated that they

had not made any mention about discontinuance of the said scheme.

(b) to (e) The scheme is reviewed from time to time at District, State and Central level for improving its implementation. Recently, Union Industry Minister reviewed the scheme with State Governments, banks and the RBI on 11.02.97. Amongst other measures, it was decided that sponsoring of applications, sanctions and disbursements under PMRY should be speeded up.

Demand of Newsprint

4269. JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA :
SHRI SURENDRA YADAV :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have assessed the annual demand of newsprint in the country;

(b) if so, the total demand of newsprint estimated during each of the last three years and for 1997-98; and

(c) the measures taken to meet the future demand of the newsprint in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b) The total demand of standard newsprint estimated during the last three years and for 1997-98 has been as under :-

Year	Demand (in lakh MT)
1994-95	6.00
1995-96	6.30
1996-97	6.62
1997-98	6.95

(c) Government has taken following steps to meet the demand of the newsprint in the country :

- (i) Newsprint has been placed under OGL.
- (ii) Under the New Industrial Policy, newsprint and writing & printing paper units based on minimum 75% pulp derived from bagasse, agro-residues and other non-conventional raw materials have been exempted from compulsory industrial licensing subject to locational policy.
- (iii) Customs duty on import of wood pulp for manufacture of newsprint has been abolished.
- (iv) Newsprint is exempted from excise duty if the mills manufacturing newsprint are included in Schedule-I of the Newsprint Control Order, 1962.